

GTU

The Sports Wagon Emerges in This Grand Touring Utility

ing to the side, and if it could be locked open while driving? How much more functional would be the small BMC sedans, which resemble station wagons, if they were equipped as station wagons? More creative thinking is becoming apparent in such cars as the Renault 16, Autobianchi Primula, MGB-GT, and the Mustang and Barracuda fastbacks.

A long-standing wish among enthusiasts is for a vehicle with the performance and appearance of a GT car, combined with the often needed accommodation and utility of a station wagon. In production reality, the MGB-GT approaches this concept. The "GTU" designs shown here illustrate additional possibilities and demonstrate how a form evolved from Grand Touring class competition vehicles is ideally suited to more utilitarian roles.

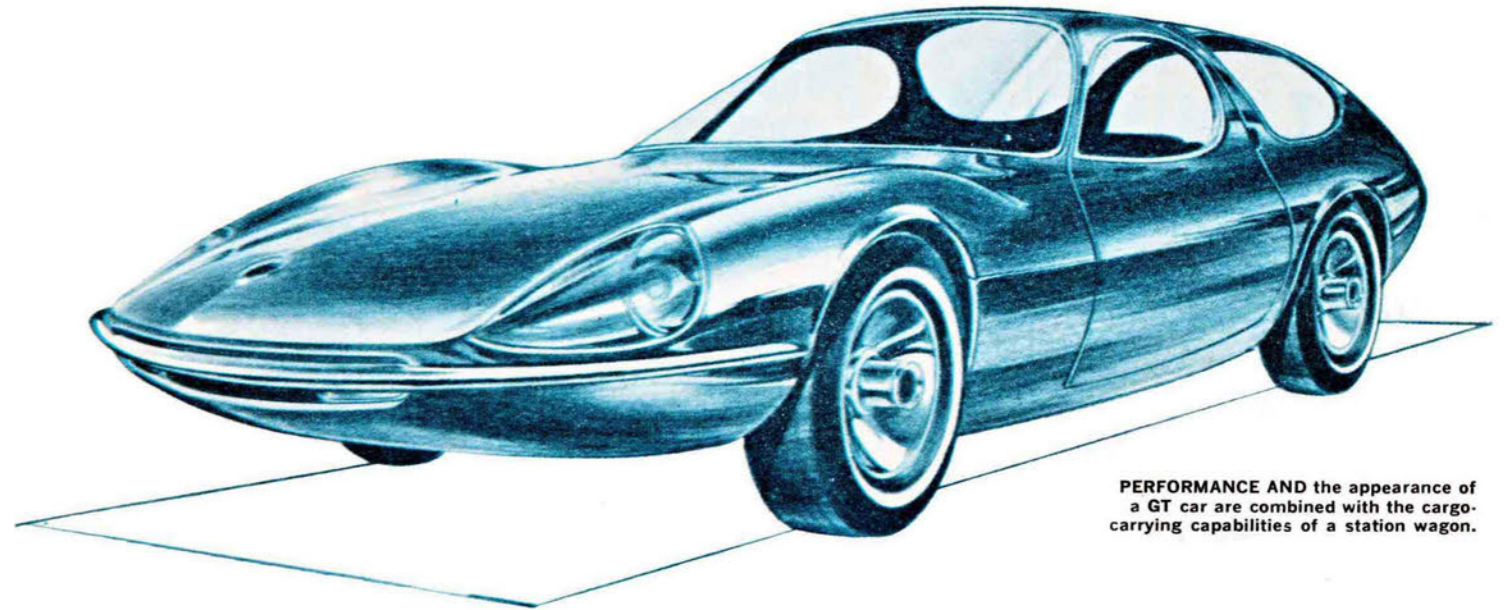
For a realistic base, the GTU is scaled to Corvette specifications and running gear. Alterations would be necessary only to the radiator and air cleaner for a lower hood profile. In addition to its obvious performance,

Corvette hardware offers the necessary size, sophistication and durability for a vehicle of this type.

The GTU body form is designed for the soundest airflow and penetration qualities. The resulting purity of line and fluidity of form create its visual appeal. The roof line is nearly horizontal, in keeping with Dr. Kamm's theories of airflow, and allows adequate rear seat head room and interior space. The truncated tail contains a window/door panel, which may be locked open. The quarter-windows carry over the roof, are hinged at the center-line, and open gull-wing fashion for safe, convenient loading. The quarter-windows also may be removed for hauling out-sized objects.

Side views show some possible seating and storage applications. The fixed rear differential housing and precisely located driveshaft of the independent rear suspension make possible the rear jumpseat/platform. Formed fuel cells in the body flanks allow a storage area beneath the floor for the spare tire and smaller items. All seats fold flat.

—Gene Garfinkle

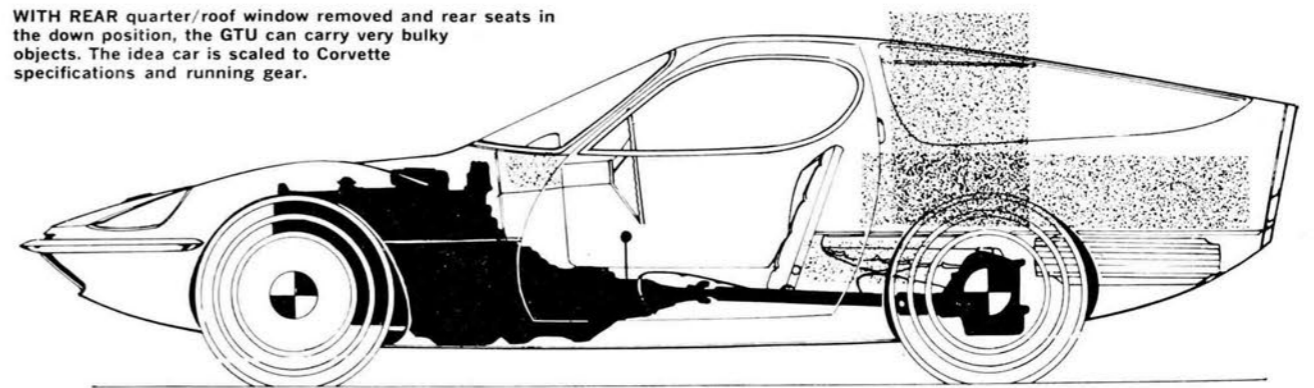


PERFORMANCE AND the appearance of a GT car are combined with the cargo-carrying capabilities of a station wagon.

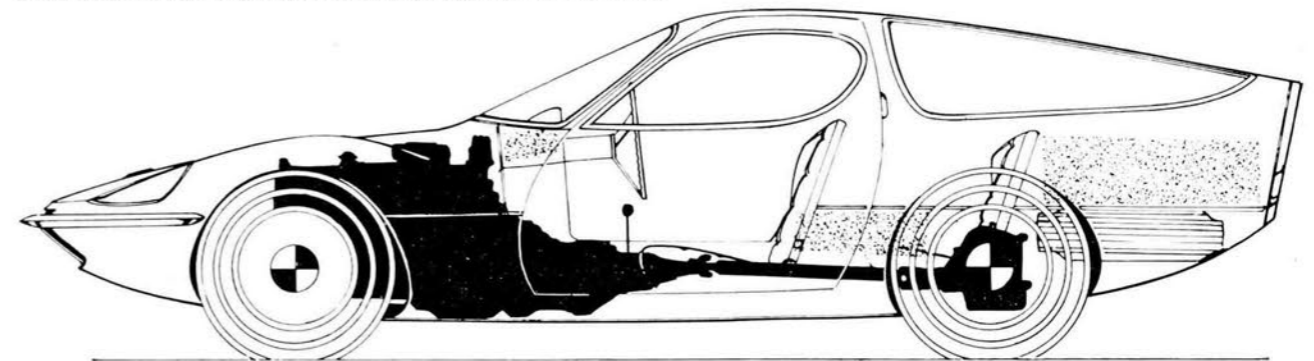
IN THE contemporary passenger car, changes in form, for the most part, are made mainly for cosmetic reasons. Along with the human habit of clinging to distinct categorizing of object types, this has limited all but token progress in creative usage of automobile exterior shapes for maximum utility. Even existing examples of variations on the too-often-played theme don't solve recognizable problems.

How much more would be the utility of Jaguar XK-E if its rear window/door opened upward, instead of swing-

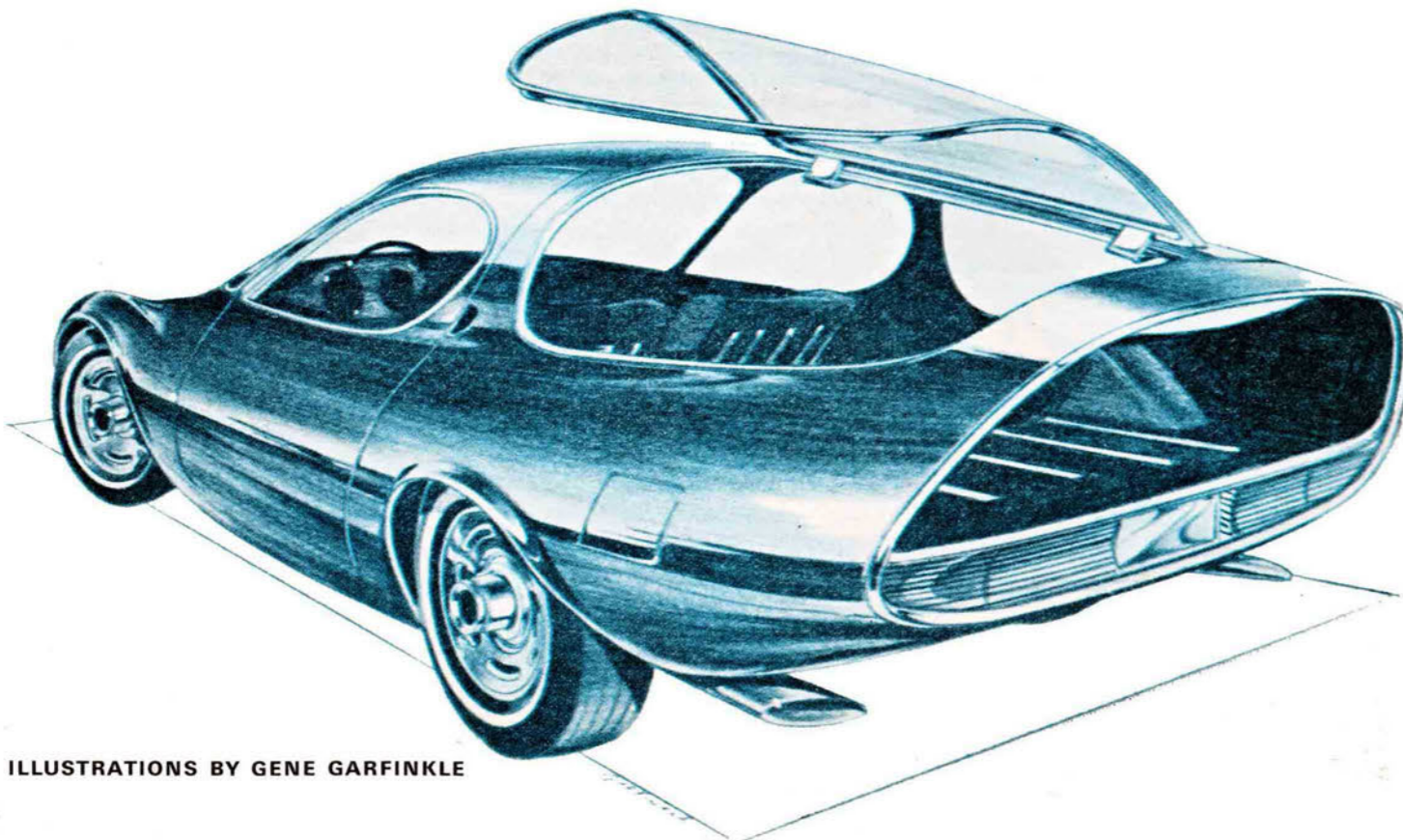
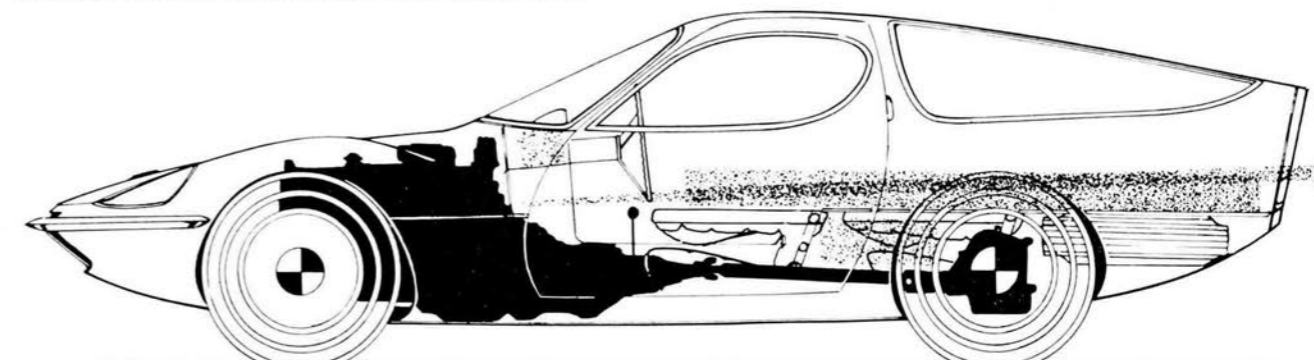
WITH REAR quarter/roof window removed and rear seats in the down position, the GTU can carry very bulky objects. The idea car is scaled to Corvette specifications and running gear.



WITH ALL four seats erect, ample luggage space remains behind rear seats and between seats. Fixed differential housing and driveshaft of independent suspension make jumpseat/platform possible.



WITH ALL four seats folded, and a mattress in place, the GTU provides sleeping quarters. And, with three seats folded, the utility tourer can carry such elongated items as a surfboard.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY GENE GARFINKLE